

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/459,479

Applicant(s)

YAMAZOE ET AL.

Examiner

Scott A Rogers

Art Unit

2626

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 December 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5,7,11-20,22-24,27-29,31-33,35-37,39-48,53-56,61-66,72 and 73 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5,7,11-20,27-29,31-33,35-37,39-48,53-56,61-66,72 and 73 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 22-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 8.9.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

Applicant's amendments with respect to all the claims have been considered. However, claims 22-24 are not allowable in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 22-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kurashige in view of well known prior art (MPEP 2144.03).

Kurashige discloses the image processing method, apparatus, system, and software for modifying a first image to obtain a second image on the basis of a first signal obtained by extracting an edge of a first image (col. 2, line 37 to col. 2, line 35), and a second signal obtained by reducing the number of tone levels (col. 3, lines 36-44), which inherently increases brightness.

Kurashige does not disclose the step of decoding the first image if it is block-encoded, or block-encoding and decoding the first image if it is not block-encoded, and then modifying the decoded first image, by smoothing, to obtain the second image.

However, it is notoriously old and well known to block-encode and decode images (e.g., by the JPEG standard) and smooth the decoded images to remove blocking artifacts.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have provided in Kurashige the well known features of block-encoding and decoding images and smoothing the decoded images in order to allow reduced storage and transmission requirements for the first image and to allow processing of the decoded image to remove blocking artifacts.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-5, 7, 11-20, 27-29, 31-33, 35-37, 39-48, 53-56, 61-66, and 72-73 are allowed.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Referring to claims 1-5, 7, 11-20, 27-29, 42-53, 55-56, 62-66, and 73, the prior art searched and of record neither anticipates nor suggests in the claimed combinations, obtaining a first signal by extracting an edge having a thickness according to an attribute of the entire first image.

Referring to claims 31-33 and 35-37, the prior art searched and of record neither anticipates nor suggests in the claimed combinations, selecting the illustration mode as the modify mode for the first image and setting detailed modify contents in the illustration mode.

Referring to claims 39-41 and 72, the prior art searched and of record neither anticipates nor suggests in the claimed combinations, a monochromatic effect mode for converting the first and second images into a monochromatic image.

Referring to claim 41, the prior art searched and of record neither anticipates nor suggests in the claimed combinations, setting a hue in the monochrome effect mode for converting the first image into a monochromatic image.

Referring to claim 54, the prior art searched and of record neither anticipates nor suggests in the claimed combinations, segmenting the first image into a plurality of regions, setting processing contents and filters for each region, and obtaining the second image by processing the first image in units of regions using the set filters.

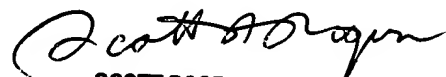
Referring to claims 61, the prior art searched and of record neither anticipates nor suggests in the claimed combinations, a monochromatic effect mode for converting the second image into a monochromatic image.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott A Rogers by telephone at 703-305-4726 and by e-mail address at scott.rogers@uspto.gov.

The official fax number for Technology Center 2600 where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to TC 2600 Customer Service at 703-306-0377.

17 February 2004


SCOTT ROGERS
PRIMARY EXAMINER